

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
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INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 6549

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP MOPS US AG MO MR SS
SUBJECT: THE SAHARA TWO YEARS AFTER THE GREEN MARCH

REF: ALGIERS 2959

1. SUBJECT TO VIEWS OF AMBASSADOR ANDERSON CURRENTLY ON CONSULTATIONS IN DEPARTMENT, WE CONCUR WITH EMBASSY ALGIERS' EXCELLENT ASSESSMENT CONTAINED REFTTEL, PARTICULARLY ITS CONCLUSIONS. WE LIMIT OUR COMMENTS TO DISCUSSION OF MOROCCO'S PERCEPTIONS OF THE SITUATION AND THOUGHTS ON U.S. POLICY.
 2. MOROCCAN ATTITUDES: WHILE FRUSTRATION AND SOME ECONOMIC FATIGUE HAVE BUILT UP AS THE CONFLICT WEARS ON, THERE IS NO SIGN THAT ANY ELEMENTS OF THE SOCIETY CONTEMPLATE A LOSSENING OF
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THE GOM POSITION ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE SAHARA QUESTION. RATHER, THE COUNTRY'S POLITICAL SEGMENTS CONTINUE TO VIE REGARDING THE MOST NATIONALISTIC AND "EFFECTIVE" (READ, FIRM) TACTICS TO PURSUE, IN WHICH LIGHT THE KING'S DECLARATION OF THE POLICY OF HOT PURSUIT SHOULD PRINCIPALLY BE SEEN. SHOULD A SERIOUS ESCALATION ERUPT, HOWEVER, THAT DOCTRINE MIGHT WELL HAVE TO BE EXERCISED TO MAINTAIN CREDIBILITY, AS EMBASSY

ALGIERS NOTED AFTER THE KING'S NOV 6 SPEECH (ALGIERS 2833).

3. SOPHISTICATED MOROCCANS UNDERSTAND THAT GEOPOLITICS RATHER THAN ECONOMICS IS AT THE BASE OF THE STRUGGLE ALTHOUGH THE BASICS ARE CLOTHED IN IDEOLOGICAL JARGON. FOR A LONG TIME, GOM LEADERS SEEMD CONVINCED THAT ALGERIA COULD BE SOOTHED BY MOROCCO'S RATIFICATION OF THE 1972 BORDER TREATY, ALTHOUGH EVEN THEN THE ECONOMIC CONCESSIONS WERE MERELY SWEETENERS. KING HASSAN AGAIN SEEMED TO HOLD OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF RATIFICATION IN HIS NOV 10 PRESS CONFERENCE, BUT WITHOUT MUCH CONVICTION. IN THE MOROCCAN APPRECIATION, THE BASICS OF THE DISPUTE HAVE COME DOWN TO THE GOM DO-OR-DIE PROPOSITION: ITS SOVEREIGNTY IN THE SAHARA.

4. SAHARAN PEOPLE: AS A RESULT OF MANIPULATION OF INFORMATION BY BOTH SIDES, THIS TERM HAS BECOME HIGHLY CONFUSED, PERHAPS HOPELESSLY SO. SINCE OUR LEGAL POSITON ON SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE SAHARA ACCEPTS THE PREMISE THAT THERE IS A SAHARAN PEOPLE, IT MAY BE TIME TO ASK OURSELVES HARD QUESTIONS IN OUR INTERNAL DELIBERATIONS. COULD THE COMPLEX TASK OF FINDING THE ORIGINAL 74,000 SAHARANS DOCUMENTED BY THE SPANISH EVER BE REALIZED? WHAT OF THE SAHARANS FORMERLY REFUGED IN MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA WHO HAVE SINCE MOVED TO THE FORMER SPANISH TERRITORY? WHAT OF THE SAHARANS AT TINDOUF NOT OF SPANISH SAHARAN ORIGIN? SUCH CONSIDERATIONS WILL IMPINGE ON OUR ASSESSMENT OF THE VALUE OF A REFERENDUM, WHICH MIGHT INCREASE PRESSURES FOR THE TERRITORY

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TO BECOME INDEPENDENT, SERIOUSLY UNDERMINE GOM AND GIRM, AND RISK AN UNFRIENDLY NEW REGIME IN EL AYOUN. AREA STABILITY WOULD APPEAR TO ARGUE FOR RESTRAINT IN PUSHING SELF-DETERMINATION TOO FAR AND AS ONLY POSSIBLE SOLUTION.

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